



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 3, Number 1, February 2017

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Update

by Claudia Browner

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GCD Awards Programs

by Claudia Browner

The Governor's Council on Disability has received many highly qualified nominations and selected the award winners for 2016:

The [Inclusion Award](#) honors a Missouri resident, organization or business that illustrates excellence in leadership for the "best of the best inclusion practices".

The 2016 winner is **UD for Yoga** in Kirkwood, and the Honorable Mention goes to **Art Inspired Academy** in Springfield.

The [Youth Leadership Award](#) honors a youth with a disability that is demonstrating outstanding leadership, advocacy, and dedication to the disability community in Missouri. The 2016 winner is **David Vetro** from St. Louis.

New in 2016, the [Website/IT Award](#) honors an organization, business, or local government that provides an outstanding and fully accessible website.

The 2016 winner is **Midland Empire Resources for Independent Living—MERIL** in St. Joseph.

The awards will be presented to the winners at the Power Up conference in Columbia on April 4th. Look for more information about awards presentation and the winners in the next issue of our newsletter!

Legislative Update

by Laura Mueth



Have you heard about the [Legislative Update](#) produced by GCD and want a copy delivered to your inbox every Friday? Contact Laura with your name and email address. She can be reached at Laura.Mueth@oa.mo.gov (preferred method), 573-751-2600, or 800-877-8249. The email includes a Microsoft Word version, a PDF version, and a plain text version to accommodate a variety of needs and preferences.

The Legislative Updates are also posted on our website at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legupdates.htm>

Legislative Education Project

by Laura Mueth



The [Legislative Education Project](#) has already been “on the road” this year. The first training was held on January 3 at ADAPT in St. Louis. The audience was organization staff and participants with severe, persistent mental illness.

January 23 and 24 brought an across the state trip with trainings in Kirksville for the staff of Rural Advocates for Independent Living on Monday and two trainings in Kansas City at The Whole Person on Tuesday. A training for staff and professionals was held in the morning and a training for consumers and others with disabilities was conducted in the afternoon. In total, fifty-eight people have participated in the LEP on the Road program. The trainings have all been very well received. In the month of March another will be held in West Plains to train staff from various organizations.

If your organization is interested in participating in the Legislative Education Project at the Capitol in Jefferson City or the LEP on the Road, please contact Laura Mueth at 573-751-2600 or by email: laura.mueth@oa.mo.gov

The photos below (left to right) show LEP participants in St. Louis, Kirksville, and Kansas City.



Disability Rights Legislative Day 2017

by Laura Mueth



Disability Rights Legislative Day will be **Wednesday, March 15** from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Capitol Rotunda. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.

The theme for the event is “We Choose Inclusion”.

The topics focused on this year during the rally will be proposed changes to the guardianship laws, MO HealthNet buy-in for workers with disabilities, focusing funding on community-based supports, and systemic threats to services. For those who are not familiar with this event, it has been done annually for sixteen years and is designed to provide an opportunity for individuals with disabilities, family members, service providers, and others to have constructive conversations with legislators regarding the issues which impact them daily. Each year specific topic areas are chosen by the planning committee based on discussions and bills in the legislature. Invitations are given to bill sponsors and other elected officials as well as advocates so that they may share their thoughts and ideas with those in attendance.

If you would like more information about this year’s event, you can contact Laura Mueth at the GCD office at 573-751-2600 or the committee co-chairs, Karen Gridley and Becky Dickey. Karen can be reached at 816-627-2270. Becky can be reached at 573-634-3223.

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Update

by Judy Grainger



Jessica Cox, Think Outside the Shoe™

Jessica Cox is this year's [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) keynote speaker and is scheduled to speak to the delegates and Alumni on Tuesday, July 18th. Jessica's inspirational message will motivate the crowd to live beyond limits!

Jessica Cox, Think Outside the Shoe™

Born without arms, Jessica Cox could have succumbed to the low expectations that ushered her into this world. In spite of them all she graduated from college, learned to swim, drive a car, surf, scuba dive, fly an airplane, become a Taekwondo State Champion, and live independently using her feet in ways others who take their hands for granted can only imagine. She holds the title of the first person without arms to get a black belt in ATA Martial Arts and the Guinness World Record for the first pilot to fly with her feet. Yet, her greatest triumph in life stands far above any physical feat. It is her unrepentant regard for herself as a whole person, her high degree of self acceptance that gives her the freedom and power to insist that society accept her, too, just as she is.



YLF Alumna Caitlin Bartley is scheduled to close out the week's events at the Closing Ceremony on Saturday, July 22nd. Caitlin will speak to this year's delegates and their families about the importance of self-determination and taking risks!

Thank you to our dedicated MO-YLF Steering Committee: Rachel Baskerville, Alissa Marlow, Dawn Cook, Diane Wieland, Kim Gee, Jaki Jefferson; Jessica Miller, Letiah Fraser, Mark Ohrenberg, Debbie Reed, Amy Siekerman and Stephanie McDowell. These individuals work with the staff at the GCD throughout the year to plan this one of a kind program.

Applications for delegates and volunteer staff are still being accepted and available on our website at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf.htm>.

DMH Blue Ribbon Award recognizes Kirksville Area's employment efforts

by Duane Shumate, DMH/DD

The Kirksville area of the Central Missouri region received a Blue Ribbon Award in February from the Department of Mental Health (DMH). This area includes Adair, Clark, Grundy, Knox, Lewis, Linn, Livingston, Macon, Mercer, Putnam, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby and Sullivan counties. The award recognizes the efforts to connect more than 25 percent of the individuals it serves to employment services. Two individual service organizations, Adair County Senate Bill 40 Board and Macon County Commission for Developmentally Disabled, received Blue Ribbon Awards in late 2016. Now the entire Kirksville area has reached Blue Ribbon Status.

The Blue Ribbon Award for **Empowering Individuals through Employment** is given by the DMH Division of Developmental Disabilities. The employment services, which include career planning, job development/placement and employment supports, enable Missourians with developmental disabilities to find and keep jobs within their communities.

"Individuals with disabilities want jobs where their skills and strengths are recognized and valued," said Division Director, Valerie Huhn. "Through partnerships with local Senate Bill 40 Boards, Targeted Case Management organizations, community providers, and area businesses, the state has built a committed team to help individuals gain the skills they need to work, earn money and connect with others to build a better life."

Gaining access to employment services is often the first step. Many times, services are only needed for a period of months as the individual learns the duties of a job. Then, they can maintain their job without paid supports.

Missouri is an *Employment First* state, meaning that all individuals who want to work can work, when given the opportunity to build upon their unique talents, skills and abilities. For more information contact Debra Walker by e-mail debra.walker@dmh.mo.gov or call (573) 751-1647.

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair, New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D., Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter, St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Todd Mayfield, Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega, Columbia
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Derek Smith, Osage Beach
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Claudia Browner, Acting Executive Director
- Judy Grainger, MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth, Legislative Coordinator

Visually Impaired: Now What?

The American Foundation of the Blind's VisionAware™ website helps adults who are losing their sight continue to live full and independent lives by providing timely information, step-by-step daily living techniques, a directory of national and local services, and a supportive online community.

One of the GCD's Council members, DeAnna Quietwater Noriega, is featured on VisionAware's website in a blog entitled Visually Impaired: Now What? Noriega's blog posts cover topics such as, "The iTouch-Project: Personal Safety For People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired".

[DeAnna Quietwater Noriega's blog posts](http://www.visionaware.org/blog/visually-impaired-now-what/deanna-quietwater-noriega/author/145) can be found at: <http://www.visionaware.org/blog/visually-impaired-now-what/deanna-quietwater-noriega/author/145>

Missouri Advocacy Summit

by Judy Grainger

SAVE THE DATE—OCTOBER 7, 2017

Alumni of the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council's Partners in Policy Making and Paraquad's Tuscher Institute invite you to join us for a day of advocacy and fun!

The Missouri Advocacy Summit's outcome is to develop an infrastructure to collaboratively advocate by cultivating grassroots efforts in various communities, while simultaneously coalescing statewide.

The event will take place Saturday, October 7, 2017 at Maryville University, St. Louis; other communities around the state such as Springfield, Kirksville, St. Joseph, Kansas City etc. will be linked into the event via Facebook live.



Keynote speaker Stephanie Woodward, Director of Advocacy Center for Disability Rights, Inc. (CDR) Rochester, New York

CDR is a disability led, not-for-profit Corporation that works for national, state, and local systemic change to advance the rights of people with disabilities.

Prior to joining CDR Stephanie worked as a litigator in Miami, Florida focusing on disability rights. Stephanie previously worked for Senator Tom Harkin (IA) and assisted his Disability Counsel on the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions by researching, drafting Legislation, and making recommendations for legislative action in regards to disability rights issues.

The keynote and advocacy session will be conducted statewide; then each site will be breaking into local community action during lunch and the afternoon.

The event flyer can be found on GCD's website at http://disability.mo.gov/files/Missouri_Advocacy_Summit.pdf

Registration information will be shared in the upcoming newsletters. For questions about the event, please contact the GCD at 573-751-2600.

Upcoming Events

- March 2017: Circle of Friends Art Show Exhibit featuring art from artists with disabilities
Kirksville Arts Center, 1902 South Baltimore, Suite 101, Kirksville MO
- March 15, 2017: Disability Rights Legislative Day
Missouri State Capitol Rotunda, Jefferson City (see page 2 for more info)
- April 2–4, 2017: [Power Up Assistive Technology Conference & Expo](http://at.mo.gov/power-up-conference/)
Holiday Inn Executive Center, Columbia, MO
<http://at.mo.gov/power-up-conference/>



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 3, Number 2, April 2017

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe



GCD Executive Director, Amy Bledsoe

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD). My name is Amy Bledsoe. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and am nearing completion of my Masters in Business Administration. I am a perpetual student. I enjoy learning something daily. My most prized role in life is as a mother to four amazing children ages 21 to 13. My husband and I have been married since 1994. I serve on my local school board and enjoy volunteering for education and safety throughout the state of Missouri. I am a cancer survivor. I also volunteer for several groups in the community in which we live. I enjoy working in the yard and playing with my young Saint Bernard, in addition to spending time with family and supporting our children in their activities.

Although I've only been with the office for a short time, it has been full of excitement. Claudia Browner served as interim director and has continued to assist in the transition. She remains busy and dedicated to the GCD. Judy Grainger accepted a new position with another agency. She did take care of the Abilities First Transition Event in Springfield for the team. Laura Mueth has remained busy with the legislative updates, providing training, and taking care of exhibits at various events.

As we work on filling the position of Disability Program Specialist, many are pitching in to cover in preparations for the 2017 Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). The volunteers on the steering committee have continued to work hard to ensure the success of the event. The speakers and DJ have been confirmed. The committee is in the process of confirming 32 delegates for the event. Donations and support are pouring in including a donation of a professional team to film parts of the event and create a Good News video for GCD to share. The video team services are being donated by the Missouri School Boards' Association. A number of Representatives and Senators have been invited to attend the legislative day of the event.

Mr. Scott Turk and Governor Greitens are looking forward to working with our office and council. Vacant council seats are in the process of being filled. GCD is also working with Treasurer Eric Schmitt regarding educating citizens on MO ABLE. The roll-out is scheduled for April 24th.

GCD team members have been participating in many meetings, trainings, and events. The annual awards were presented to the 2016 award winners at the Missouri Assistive Technology Conference. We continue to provide technical assistance to individuals throughout the state. There are many pending events, presentations, and trainings for the GCD team. Priorities include the YLF, forging strong relationships with key stakeholders including elected officials, departments, and non-government agencies and entities. Improving safety and crisis plans for businesses, schools, and communities to include plans for individuals with disabilities is a priority as is assisting state government departments to improve access to websites.

2016 GCD Awards presented at Power Up

by Claudia Browner

A panel of judges representing Council members and state liaisons selected the winners of the annual Inclusion, Youth Leadership, and Website/IT awards from many highly qualified nominations. The winners of the 2016 GCD Awards, who exemplify standards of excellence in enhancing life for individuals living with disabilities were presented with their awards at the Power Up conference in Columbia on April 4.



2016 Inclusion Award winner: UD for Yoga in Kirkwood

Natasha Baebler is a yoga teacher and special educator successfully working and running her own yoga business, UD for Yoga, as a person with disabilities. Her innovative and accessible approach to yoga makes it accessible to people with all ability levels. Baebler has been specifically trained and built her business to teach yoga to children and adults with varying support needs, including visual impairments and children who use wheelchairs. Baebler is an excellent role model for inclusion and an example of living a full life despite her disabilities.

Honorable Mention: Art Inspired Academy in Springfield

Art Inspired Academy (AIA) provides inclusive creative arts opportunities to children and adults, both with and without disabilities in the community. Through partnerships with the Springfield Boys and Girls Clubs, AIA provides art and theater classes to children with and without disabilities. For many of the students, these classes have been the first time they have had interaction with someone with a disability or a different background. AIA has also formed a partnership with Pigtails and Crewcuts, a local children's salon that accommodates children who have trouble getting their hair cut due to sensory issues. AIA music and theater classes are held at Drury University, where students and volunteers work together to write and perform two productions a year, which are open to the public.



4th Annual Youth Leadership Award: David Vетор

David Vетор serves as the Student Government Association president for the Florissant Valley campus of St. Louis Community College. He is very passionate about students with disabilities having the access they need to ensure academic and social success on campus. Vетор takes great pride in his academic excellence and encourages others to use the support services available to them. As a representative of the deaf community, Vетор volunteers with the Deaf Communication Studies Program. He created a community college recruitment video and acted in college theater productions. His most recent focus is working to make the college emergency alert system more accessible.



1st Annual Website/IT Award: Midland Empire Resources for Independent Living, St. Joseph

Midland Empire Resources for Independent Living (MERIL) is a center for independent living committed to removing barriers for persons with disabilities and the aging in northwest Missouri, serving nine counties in the region and providing cross-disability services in areas such as advocacy, peer support, independent living, information and referral, and transition. MERIL's website is designed to be accessible to all, including people with visual impairments who are using a screen reader or other forms of assistive technology. It allows changes in font size, high contrast, and translation capabilities. Closed caption of videos and audio content make the website accessible to people who are deaf or hearing impaired. Overall, the website is user friendly and easy to navigate.



Photos from top: Natasha Baebler accepts the Inclusion Award from Amy Bledsoe; Amy Bledsoe presents the Honorable Mention to Art Inspired Academy staff Jamie McGranahan, Richard White, and Jane Gordon; David Vетор accepts the Youth Leadership Award from Amy Bledsoe; MERIL staff Paul Bergonzoni and director Rob Honan accept the Website/IT Award.

Meet Council member Chip Hailey

by Claudia Brownier

Chip Hailey (pictured on right) was appointed as a Council member on January 6, 2017. He works as a Public Policy Advocate for The Independent Living Center, Inc. in Joplin, Missouri. In addition to being an advocate for people with disabilities, he has been a licensed ordained minister since 1982.

Hailey does a two hour weekly internet radio program with another visually impaired friend, Denny Huff, Missouri Council of the Blind president, and Director of Gateway for the Blind. The program is called The Gospel Jubilee where they play songs from today's and yesterday's Southern, bluegrass, and country gospel.

The program was first aired on the American Council of the Blind's (ACB) internet radio back in April of 2014. The first broadcast was an hour long program but was promoted to a two hour program the following week.



They share interesting facts about the artists and groups that they feature each week as well as play gospel songs in keeping with any special holidays such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, Christmas and Easter, etc.

Successful Disability Rights Legislative Day

by Laura Mueth

Three hundred ninety-two disability advocates from all over the state, representing a variety of organizations came to the Capitol on March 15 for Disability Rights Legislative Day.

Speakers and legislation highlighted during the event centered on the "We Choose Inclusion" theme. Speakers were Senator Scott Sifton discussing Senate Bill 203 and the MO HealthNet Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities program, Attorney Elizabeth Moran and Representative Jim Neely focusing on House Bill 626 and needed changes for Missouri's guardianship statute, and self-advocate Patty Goss and Brian Colby from the Missouri Budget Project addressing the potential changes to MO HealthNet and the services and supports Missourians with disabilities need in order to live the lives they desire. State Treasurer Eric Schmitt participated via a recorded video message providing an update on the Missouri Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) program.



The event was emceed for the first time by Emilio Vela, Chief Executive Officer of Southwest Center for Independent Living. His message was one of continuing to communicate with legislators past the event reminding the audience that it is a marathon. Individuals and groups met with senators and representatives after the "rally" portion of the event to discuss those bills which impact them.



Photos: (Left) Emilio Vela addresses the crowd in the Capitol rotunda; (right) The Disability Rights Legislative Day audience is seated in the capitol rotunda.

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair, New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D., Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter, St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Todd Mayfield, Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega, Columbia
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Derek Smith, Osage Beach
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Spotlight on Wolfner Library

Wolfner Talking Book and Braille Library provides leisure reading audio, braille, and large print books to visually impaired and physically disabled Missouri citizens of all ages.

Wolfner Library offers more than just books by mail. Other services include:

BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download): BARD is the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) audio book download website. Patrons can download books directly to a blank cartridge provided by Wolfner Library for their talking book machine or use the Apple, Android, or Kindle Fire app to download audio books directly to their mobile device.

Locally Recorded Books: Wolfner Library records books about Missouri, with a Missouri setting and/or by a Missouri author.

Print/Braille Books: Print/Braille children's picture books allow a visually impaired child or adult to read with a sighted individual. They are great for story times!

Reading Programs: Wolfner Library offers a youth summer reading and an adult winter reading program each year.

Book Clubs: Wolfner Library patrons 18 and older may participate in call-in book clubs. Call to learn more about the latest selections for our fiction, non-fiction and mild read clubs!

Follow Wolfner Library on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/wolfnerlibrary>) to learn about new services, changes in services and to sample the titles offered.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Wolfner Library at wolfner@sos.mo.gov or (800) 392-2614.



Upcoming Events

- Launch of MO ABLE Program in Missouri—April 24, 2017 at Paraquad, St. Louis
- Missouri Youth Leadership Forum—July 18-22, 2017 at MU, Columbia
- Missouri Advocacy Summit—October 7, 2017 Save the Date!

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Amy Bledsoe, Executive Director
- Claudia Browner, Office Manager
- Vacant, MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth, Legislative Coordinator



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) by statute is to have a council of twenty (20) and a chairperson. Council members are appointed by the Governor. Ms. Wright, Council Chair, and I have met with staff members of the Boards and Commissions Office a couple of times. Mr. Turk and Mr. Hogan are certainly engaged and understand the mission and importance of GCD. We currently have eight (8) open council seats. I thought I'd share qualities we are all looking for in council members. In addition to the requirements by statute, qualities of council members include passion, commitment, and leadership. Council members run on passion for the mission of GCD – "To provide leadership and support so people with disabilities achieve inclusion and independence." Recently, council members shared passions to include employment, education, transportation, housing, independent living and universal design, as well as specific disabilities. These are causes that excite us and as we serve the citizens of Missouri we are fueled to continue to do more. As an agency, we truly want to help others achieve a life of inclusion and independence; we want those we serve to achieve more than they ever thought possible.

I was recently reminded of the book "How Full is Your Bucket" by Tom Rath. The book is based on the theory that each person has an invisible bucket that is either filled or emptied throughout our daily lives. Our buckets are filled by others interacting with us in a positive manner. This may include compliments and acts of kindness. When our bucket is filled or full, we feel amazing. Others also have opportunities to take dips out of our buckets by saying or doing things that impact us in a negative manner. The lower the amount in our bucket, the worse we feel (or make others feel as we dip from their buckets). A full bucket provides us with energy just as one that is low or empty zaps our energy. Upon entry into my office at GCD you'll notice a sign that reads "Attitude is a little thing that makes a BIG difference," and another sign that reads "Each day comes with 86,400 seconds...tick tock." As you reflect upon the brief of the bucket and these signs, please remember we make choices every moment of every day. Those choices can either fill or dip from the bucket of others or ourselves. Let's continue to find ways to fill buckets and renew our passion for the important work we do for the citizens of Missouri.



We are all pleased that our team is back up to four members in the office. Wendy Molitor joined us May 22nd. She brings extensive experience working with people who live with various disabilities. Please read more about Ms. Molitor in this newsletter. Our team has decided we will implement monthly team meetings to include sharing of various trainings and meetings attended, as well as professional development for our team. I'm honored to lead this team of amazing women who appreciate and desire professional development, as well as work daily to improve lives and fill buckets.

Photo above: GCD Staff (from left to right) - Amy Bledsoe, Claudia Browner, Wendy Molitor, Laura Mueth, and Syler

Meet GCD's Newest Staff Member

by Wendy Molitor



I would like to introduce myself as the new Disability Program Specialist. I will be taking over the exciting task of coordinating the [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum \(MO-YLF\)](#) this year in July. My name is Wendy Molitor and I am a provisionally licensed professional counselor with a Masters in Education and Agency Counseling.

I love a good challenge, staying busy and finding new ways to advocate and to help create true inclusion. I have several years of experience working with individuals with disabilities, ranging from providing community support and advocacy to volunteer work and individual vocational counseling.

I have three unique children that have helped form me into the person I am today. Their ages are 22, 20 and 18. I have an amazing husband, John, who is an incredible father and the one that keeps me centered. I also have 3 dogs, 2 German shepherd's and a Great Pyrenees, all of which think they are human and keep me on my toes in any spare time I muster. My family, my dogs and I all love camping, kayaking on rivers, and enjoying the outdoors.

I am looking forward to working with all of the staff, Council members, liaisons, and community partners of the Governor's Council on Disability.

MO-YLF is approaching quickly and much work is being done behind the scenes to ensure another successful year in which a group of our Missouri youth with disabilities jumps into an intense week of leadership training.

The schedule is in the process of being finalized as are all of the logistics. We have 25 delegates from all over the state of Missouri joining us along with 11 returning MO-YLF alumni who will be volunteering their time as staff.

During the Forum, the delegates will be doing a community service project to give back to our community. This year staff and delegates will be collecting items to support MU Children's Hospital. MU Children's Hospital makes sure there are clean, new toys in the playrooms, treatment rooms and as birthday gifts. As a first leadership challenge we are asking each delegate to collect items on the list and bring them to the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum in July. The delegate that brings the most items will be recognized and awarded a prize.

Photo on left: Wendy Molitor

Missouri ABLE Accounts Now Available

by Laura Mueth



Over the last few years you may have heard conversations about Missouri implementing an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) program. The wait is over!

Individuals with disabilities that were developed or acquired before the age of twenty-six can now open an ABLE account through which they can save and invest money to pay for qualified disability related expenses in the areas of basic living expenses, housing, transportation, assistive technology, employment training, education, health and wellness, financial management, and legal fees. Any money in the account is not counted toward limits for federal benefit eligibility therefore an individual can have an ABLE account and still maintain eligibility for programs such as SSI or MO HealthNet (Missouri's Medicaid program). It is also not subject to federal or state income tax.

Treasurer Eric Schmitt's office developed a website (<https://www.moable.com/>) for the program. It provides information about all the facets of the program and is the avenue for opening an account.

Meet Council Member Rosemary Hendon

by Rosemary Hendon

Hi, my name is Rosemary Hendon and I am currently living in West Plains, in Howell County, Missouri. I was raised in Imperial, in Jefferson County. At the age of four I had rheumatic fever which damaged my heart valves. I began working for the State of Missouri in St. Charles at the Family Services office in 1985. In 1988, I had open heart surgery to replace the aortic valve with a mechanical valve. Upon recovery, I decided to attend college and moved to West Plains. While in college I had a massive stroke which resulted in paralysis on my left side. It took a great deal of hard work, determination, and therapy to regain some movement I lost as a result of the stroke. I was very close to completing my college degree yet was unable to travel to Springfield to do so. The Dean of Hotel and Restaurant Administration was not in favor of me completing my degree requirements through the mail or online. It took a great deal of persuading and I completed my B.S. in Hotel and Restaurant Administration in 1998. What a year I had. I also got married that summer.

I wanted to return to work but finding jobs that I could manage with my disabilities was a challenge. The Director of Vocational Rehabilitation Services in West Plains provided a referral and I was hired as an Independent Living Specialist at Ozark Independent Living in 2002 where I continued to work through 2016. In this role I assisted people of all ages and disabilities by helping them obtain ramps for easier access, demonstrating phones through the Tap Phone Program for persons with hearing and/or vision disabilities, and serving as a peer counselor, to name a few.

My passion has always been to help make people aware of their abilities instead of focusing on their disabilities. My hobbies include traveling around the world and making my voice heard for accessibility within the travel industry. Many times a reservation is made for accessibility in travel and when the person takes the trip, staff state they do not have accessible accommodations. There is more work to do.

It is an honor to be on the Governor's Council on Disabilities and to be a voice for others.

Ms. Hendon was appointed to the council January 6, 2017.



Council member Rosemary Hendon

First Responder Disability Awareness Training in Missouri

by Laura Mueth

Niagara University's First Responder Disability Awareness Training (FRDAT) program began in Missouri this month. The program has developed a curriculum specific to each first responder discipline: Law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical services, and 9-1-1 operators. It includes information that each discipline needs to know to interact with and respond to individuals with disabilities in a positive manner.



The curriculum was developed by subject matter experts per disability, disability advocates, and first responders. David Whalen, project director, has conducted over 100 trainings specific to first responders/emergency response. It has been customized for Missouri through suggestions and resources from Missouri disability and first responder agencies and organizations including Laura Mueth from the GCD. It is designed in a Train the Trainer format whereby first responders in attendance will own the product and train as it fits their schedule.



The program is being funded in Missouri through a two year grant from the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council. The inaugural law enforcement training was conducted June 12th and 13th and the inaugural firefighter/emergency medical services training was conducted June 14th and 15th in Kansas City. More information about the FRDAT program can be found at <http://frdat.niagara.edu/>.

**Missouri Governor's
Council on Disability
Members**

- Yvonne Wright, Chair,
New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D.,
Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock,
Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D.,
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- Ronald Hack,
St. Louis
- Chip Hailey,
Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter,
St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon,
West Plains
- Todd Mayfield,
Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega,
Columbia
- Susan Orton,
Creve Coeur
- Derek Smith,
Osage Beach
- James Trout,
St. Louis
- Robert Wallace,
St. Louis

Missouri Celebrates 115th State Fair in August

By Jennifer Hentges, Missouri Department of Agriculture

The Missouri State Fair, located on the historic Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia, is celebrating its 115th year in 2017.

The Fair is the premier agriculture showcase in the state, with approximately 30,000 entries each year in categories including livestock, fine arts, floriculture, home economics and more. More than 3,200 Missouri 4-H and FFA youth participated in the State Fair last year.

The Fair also offers top-notch entertainment. Concerts this year include:

- Sawyer Brown with Royal Wade Kimes, Aug. 10
- Halestorm with Skylar Grey, Aug. 11
- Alan Jackson with special guest Lee Ann Womack, Aug. 12
- Granger Smith feat. Earl Dibbles Jr. with Chris Lane, Aug. 15
- Southern Uprising Tour with Travis Tritt, The Charlie Daniels Band, The Marshall Tucker Band and The Outlaws, Aug. 16
- For KING & COUNTRY with Jordan Feliz, Aug. 17
- Red Dirt Country Night with Casey Donahew, Wade Bowen and Mo Pitney, Aug. 18
- Little Big Town with Seth Ennis, Aug. 19

Concert tickets go on sale to the public starting June 20.

In addition to concerts, the Fair offers rodeo, bull riding and motorsports action as well as an impressive line-up of free and family-friendly entertainment around the fairgrounds.

All this - plus fantastic fair food, varied shopping experiences, thrilling carnival rides and more - is offered August 10-20, 2017, at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia! Visit mostatefair.com for more information.

In addition to the excitement of the Fair, the Missouri Department of Agriculture is excited to introduce Jennifer Hentges as their Governor's Council on Disability liaison.



**Missouri Governor's
Council on Disability
Staff Members**

- Amy Bledsoe,
Executive Director
- Claudia Browner,
Office Manager
- Wendy Molitor,
MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth,
Legislative Coordinator

Upcoming Events

- Missouri Youth Leadership Forum—July 18-22, 2017 at MU, Columbia
- Missouri Advocacy Summit—October 7, 2017 Save the Date!



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 3, Number 4, August 2017

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe

Collaboration has been a buzz word in the worlds of business and education for many years. While I must admit I did not care for group projects as a student, I do enjoy collaboration in my career. Henry Ford said "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

The staff members of the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) have been working hard to increase outreach and collaboration with departments, agencies, councils and boards throughout the state. We attend many meetings in person, over the phone and even through social media. Each time we open ourselves up for collaboration we gain more contacts and are able to provide our service of referrals and education to more citizens of Missouri.

Collaboration also leads to more efficient problem solving. Problem solving is really what we at GCD do on a daily basis. In our efforts to join with other entities in our state, we have quickly been able to increase the services and education we provide. We have recently revised our database to allow us to more accurately capture what we do in terms of numbers and satisfaction reports. This will certainly help us to serve more of Missouri and we will have data for proof.

In addition to expanding the value of our work, collaboration certainly helps us to save costs, strengthen our programs, and improve efficiency. A very recent example is attending a training session in the Truman building. This led to on-going collaboration meetings with other agencies, which led to us providing educational presentations and the other partners being able to support us with ideas, demonstrations, and specialists to help us to make our own presentations more accessible to individuals with various disabilities. That is a win. Through collaboration with others we are able to learn more and the result is we are able to provide better service for Missouri citizens.

2017 Legislative Priorities Poll

by Laura Mueth

The 2017 Legislative Priorities Poll was released in early August. The GCD staff and council members encourage every Missouri citizen impacted by disability to complete it. The deadline is Sunday, November 26, 2017. Each response received is reviewed by staff and will be used as we shape the Council's legislative priorities and interactions with legislators for the 2018 legislative session.

The poll can be completed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BRZ2JR8>. It is also available in PDF format which can be filled out electronically or printed and completed by hand. This can be accessed at http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legislative_priorities_poll.htm or by contacting Laura Mueth at Laura.Mueth@oa.mo.gov. Hard copies can be returned via fax (573-526-4109), email (gcd@oa.mo.gov), and mail (Governor's Council on Disability, 301 West High Street, Room 840 PO Box 1668, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1668). Assistance with completion is available by contacting the GCD office at 800-877-8249.

If you have already completed it, thank you and please keep spreading the word with your contacts.

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum a Success

by Wendy Molitor



Office of the Governor
State of Missouri

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a unique career and leadership training program for high school students with disabilities, sponsored by the Governor's Council on Disability; and

WHEREAS, the goals of YLF are to learn and apply leadership principles; understand the disability experience and share resources; learn assistive technology; build independent living skills and set career goals; and develop advocacy skills; and

WHEREAS, delegates are selected from their local communities to cultivate leadership, citizenship, social skills, and career development skills; and

WHEREAS, YLF enables students to meet successful adults with disabilities who share similar challenges, provides an atmosphere of encouragement, and helps youth realize their abilities; and

WHEREAS, the 15th annual Missouri Youth Leadership Forum will be held July 18-22, 2017.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Eric R. Greitens, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI, do hereby recognize the

MISSOURI YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Missouri, in the City of Jefferson, this 20th day of July, 2017.



Eric R. Greitens
Governor
Attest:
Jay D. Wright
Secretary of Staff



The 2017 [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) was a huge success this year. We had 24 delegates that graduated into lifelong alumni. This year's group was full of amazing leadership qualities and nearly every one of our 2017 alumni have asked to either come back as support staff volunteers for next year or to link with others in their area to jump into advocacy and leadership roles. Motivation and energy was high the entire week and we simply could not have asked for a better group of young leaders. We had an outstanding group of returning alumni as well as volunteers from the MU Hook Center, MERIL, Vocational Rehabilitation, Paraquad, Camden County DD Resources, The Whole Person, and many individuals from around the state. We also had two mentors that assisted in facilitating the Mentor Luncheon and stayed for the entire week. Governor Greitens issued a proclamation (photo on left) for MO-YLF and a copy will be shared with each of the 2017 alumni. Governor Greitens also gave a free copy of one of his books, *The Warriors Heart*, to each 2017 delegate present at the Missouri State Capitol.



Governor's Office staff member Kevin Carr presents a proclamation to GCD Executive Director Amy Bledsoe.

Now that we have graduated this amazing group of 2017 alumni, we have decided to move to the next step. We will be introducing our first **Advocacy Summit**. We currently have a planning committee that includes MO-YLF alumni. This first Advocacy Summit will take place via Facebook Live on Saturday, November 18th, 2017 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM. Five locations across the state have confirmed that they will host this event. The five host sites are ILRC in Jefferson City, SCIL in Springfield, Paraquad in St Louis, RAIL in Kirksville and Alphapointe in Kansas City as well as FACEBOOK LIVE from anywhere.

Our first Advocacy Summit is designed to educate, encourage, connect and grow leaders within the advocacy community. We are working to create ongoing leadership development, training, and are moving into a regional system to enhance communication and regional grassroots advocacy. Our hope is to have two summits annually and to keep the different regions in Missouri motivated. We want to grow leaders and strong self-advocates, we also want to empower caregivers to let go and promote self-autonomy and independence within those they care for and support. It is hard and unfortunately, there is no "how to" manual. Our hope is to provide the tools, support and networking needed across the state so that everyone has a local grassroots support system to plug into. We have five presenters for our first summit: Jody Michael and Steven Devero (Warm Fuzzies), Elijah Mayfield, Katheryne Staeger-Wilson, Christina and Joe Bogart, and Paul Meyer. We will have "Check In" activities after each presentation, lunch at each host location and games developed to measure outcomes. Registration information will be available soon.

We also have changes to the MYLIFE Alumni Association coming that include a Vice President, President Elect, President, and Immediate Past President in order to enhance the leadership platform in our alumni and to spread the responsibility so it is not all placed on one person. We have many exciting things taking place and encourage everyone to jump in and become a part of the movement.

Accommodation for Success Reverse Job Fair

by James Sahaida, SLATE

Accommodation for Success Reverse Job Fair Turns Tables for Job Seekers with Disabilities

The Third Annual *Accommodation for Success* Disability Employment Event took place on August 10, 2017, at the Forest Park Campus of St. Louis Community College. The event was organized to make it easier for area businesses to build diverse workforce. This year, the event included the first Reverse Job Fair in St. Louis.

Unlike most traditional job fairs, this innovative recruitment event focused on showcasing talents and professional interests of **80+** job candidates with disabilities. Participants met with potential employers



Recruiters participate in workshops on disability inclusion, workplace culture and recruitment

in their booth spaces, demonstrating experience and skills in a variety of industries, while human resource professionals roamed the room, meeting the candidates they were interested in hiring. More than **116** recruiters representing **99** area companies were present. With **236** total registrants, not including job candidates, this year's event was the largest yet.



A job candidate promotes her expertise to potential employers

Accommodation for Success event is a collaborative effort between the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), regional job centers, and more than 20 of the region's disability employment organizations. Workshops and resources on disability inclusion, etiquette, recruitment, and workplace culture were offered to registered businesses, prior to the reverse job fair.

Earlier in the day, St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson greeted the attendees and delivered a keynote address. She acknowledged regional efforts to improve services for disabled citizens, and encouraged the employers to take a hard look. State Representative Sarah Unsicker also attended the event.

A number of participating businesses were selected by each partnering region and presented with awards for Emerging Partner, Exceptional Supporter of Inclusive Practices, and Outstanding Inclusive Employer; awards were presented by Suzanne Waha of Schenker Inc. and Sandy Keyser, Department of Mental Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities.

"This annual event marked a pivotal moment for thousands of adults living with mental or physical disabilities in our City. A large percentage of people living in poverty are disabled; I believe their true economic independence should begin with giving them access to jobs," said Dr. Alice Prince, SLATE's newly appointed Executive Director.

For more information, please view news coverage, as aired on KSDK/Channel 5, on August 10, 2017:

<http://www.ksdk.com/news/local/reverse-job-fair-connects-st-louisans-with-disabilities-to-employers/463488041>

Article provided by:

James Sahaida, Local WIOA EO Officer, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment.

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair,
New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D.,
Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock,
Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D.,
St. Louis
- Ronald Hack,
St. Louis
- Chip Hailey,
Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter,
St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon,
West Plains
- Todd Mayfield,
Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega,
Columbia
- Susan Orton,
Creve Coeur
- Derek Smith,
Osage Beach
- James Trout,
St. Louis
- Robert Wallace,
St. Louis

Meet Council Member Bob Wallace, Jr.



Council Member
Bob Wallace

As chairman of the Thompson Coburn LLP Firm's Sports Law Group, Bob represents teams, prospective buyers of sports teams, companies interested in sports marketing and civic and government entities facing team relocation or facility issues.

He also assists players, coaches and executives with contract negotiations and separation agreements, and serves as an NFL-approved hearing officer for violations of the league's drug and conduct policies.

Bob has cultivated more than 30 years of experience in both the St. Louis business community and the national sports arena through his past executive and legal work for the Philadelphia Eagles and the St. Louis Football Cardinals.

He spent 16 years with the Rams, serving as the team's executive vice president and general counsel. During his 30-year career in professional football, Bob was one of the highest-ranking African-American club executives in the National Football League. He led the Rams' operations and business departments during two Super Bowl appearances, managed the team's \$200 million budget and served as lead negotiator in the renaming of the Rams' stadium to the Edward Jones Dome.

Bob has taught sports law as an adjunct professor at both Washington University School of Law and Saint Louis University School of Law. He also wrote a weekly magazine column, "Business Philosophy," and has authored several other articles on sports law topics.

Bob has been serving as a Council member for the Governor's Council on Disability since 2010 and serves on the Executive and Advocacy Committees.

Bob also serves as the president of Giant Steps of St. Louis (a school for children 3-21 with autism), a member of the Chancellor's Council at UMSL, and past president and current treasurer for the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Upcoming Events

- Disability 101 Training, September 12-14, 2017 and October 18-19, 2017 at the 16th Circuit Court in Kansas City and Independence
- First Responder Disability Awareness Training, September 22, 2017 in Jefferson City
- Missouri Brain Injury Association—Statewide Conference, October 5-7, 2017 at the Marriott St. Louis West Chesterfield, www.biamo.org
- MultiCultural Fall Festival, October 7, 2017 in Downtown Jefferson City
- MPACT (Missouri Parents Act) Transition Summit, October 17, 2017 at the Truman Building in Jefferson City - www.missouriparentsact.org
- disAbility Awareness Day Conference, October 17, 2017 at Truman State University, Kirksville—Contact: Chuck Comstock (660) 785-2328
- Missouri Advocacy Summit, November 18, 2017—Save the Date! Registration coming soon.

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Amy Bledsoe,
Executive Director
- Claudia Browner,
Office Manager
- Wendy Molitor,
MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth,
Legislative Coordinator



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 3, Number 5, October 2017

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe

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October is "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." Governor Greitens signed a proclamation recognizing the event in Missouri. Claudia Browner has put together a nice display for the event on the second floor of the Truman Building. As we promote awareness and rights of those living with disabilities, we like to remind everyone we all have purpose. Some of us find purpose in our family and friends, our community, our faith, and in our employment or volunteer work. We know that no two stories are the same and we all bring value to the conversation. So although October is a month in which we highlight disability employment, we know we are able to advocate and promote awareness of disability rights for all disabilities every day of the year.

GCD staff have been very busy in the last two months. We have attended various conferences, meetings, and work groups. Laura Mueth, Wendy Molitor, and I all took part in providing training for the Kansas City 16th Circuit Court employees and received very good feedback. We plan to use this training to springboard into other circuits and expand our training to the law enforcement and first responder communities. We have also attended a grant writing workshop which will be followed by an advanced training so Wendy can focus on writing grants to fund the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) and Alumni continued training and events. I will focus on obtaining federal funding and additional grants for GCD as we continue to expand our services with a focus on training and outreach. Wendy and Claudia participated in the annual MPACT Transition Summit in the Truman building and GCD was represented at the Kirksville 9th Annual Disability Awareness Day at Truman University. Laura continues to provide training to the Highway Patrol's Driver Examiners. I am now attending meetings for the Safety Coordinators in the Truman building and we will make plans for proper evacuations and procedures to follow for weather, fire, and intruder situations including persons with disabilities in all state buildings. As GCD staff travel throughout the state, we also make a point of stopping in to see the Independent Living Centers and schools to inform them of opportunities with GCD and MO-YLF.

Our Annual Legislative Priorities Poll remains open through November 26th. We currently have more than 500 responses. Please encourage everyone to complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BVB5MRJ>. Links for a printable version are available on the Disability Portal https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legislative_priorities_poll.htm, and the Governor's Council on Disability and Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Facebook pages, as well as on Twitter. A report will be compiled following the close of the survey and will be available on our website and personally delivered to the Governor and all members of the General Assembly, as well as our U.S. Representative and Senators. They need to hear from you.

Please see more information in this issue on GCD's [Annual Awards](#) programs. Please share the information on the awards program and nominate a youth leader, a Missouri resident, organization or business that illustrates excellence in leadership for best inclusion practices, and/or a Missouri non-profit organization, business or local government that provides the most outstanding and accessible website. The nomination forms are available on the GCD website at https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/files/2017Nomination_Information.pdf

GCD provides Circuit Court Training

by Laura Mueth



Laura Mueth presents to a group of court employees

GCD executive director Amy Bledsoe and disability program specialists Wendy Molitor and Laura Mueth provided disability awareness training to staff of the 16th Circuit Court in Kansas City for the first time this fall.

Trainings occurred September 12 through 14 and October 18 and 19. A total of 145 individuals attended the training. Topics covered included the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, person first language, etiquette, guidance for interactions, invisible and visible disabilities, mental health disabilities, and providing accommodations to employees and visitors. A list of websites which attendees can use as resources was also included.

The training was well received by those who attended. It provided several individuals with their first exposure to disability related information. The majority of those who completed an evaluation of the training indicated their knowledge increased as a result of the training and that they will use it in their work at the Court.

Meet MO-YLF Alumna Madelyn Hubbs

by Wendy Molitor



Madelyn Hubbs

One of the Governor's Council on Disability's programs is the annual [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) for students with disabilities. Since inception of this 5-day leadership and transition training program in 2001, 297 delegates have graduated from the MO-YLF.

This month's MO-YLF spotlight is on Madelyn Hubbs. Madelyn graduated from the MO-YLF program this past summer and brought a tremendous amount of leadership skills already in place. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Board Student Administration Action Committee, Pattonville United, Girls as Leaders not as Captains, Pattonville High School (PHS) Varsity Swim and Dive, PHS Junior Varsity Water Polo, Disability Athletic Sports Association Swim, Bridgeton Swim and Dive Team, Shriners Hospitals for Children Patient Ambassador, and Disability Athletic Sports Association Camp Counselor. Madelyn lives in the St Louis area in Bridgeton and is very involved with the Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Madelyn's story has been featured on Shriners' website (<https://www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/news/StL-MadelynHubbs>).

Madelyn plans to attend college after she graduates high school to obtain a degree in Occupational Therapy so that she can help others reach their full potential and live independently. Madelyn is already a leader in her community and sees herself as continuing this leadership by making a difference in her community in many different ways. She plans to continue to talk to schools and large groups about disabilities and differences and how to embrace those differences proudly. She also plans to continue educating others on the importance of disability awareness and respect. More than anything Madelyn just wants to make a positive difference and have an impact wherever she goes.

Meet Council Member Joan Bergstrom

Joan E. Bergstrom has been serving on the Governor's Council on Disability since 2008. Her professional teaching career began at the State School for Severely Handicapped in Jefferson City and spanned over 33 years experiencing a wide variety of public education service. She has been a classroom teacher of special education students with Learning Disabilities, Autism, Emotional Disorders, Orthopedically Disabled, and Intellectual Disabilities; district administrator of special education services; assistant principal at Jefferson City High School and a college level director of a program for students with disabilities (ABLE) at Metropolitan Community College: Longview.

Dr. Bergstrom was and continues to be very involved in professional organizations in leadership positions. She has been professionally recognized by her peers and her students with awards such as: "Who's Who in America's Teachers", "Student Advocate of the Year", "Outstanding Contribution to Life and Learning", to name a few. Dr. Bergstrom also continues to serve on the Missouri Advisory Council to the Commission on Civil Rights.



Council Member Joan Bergstrom

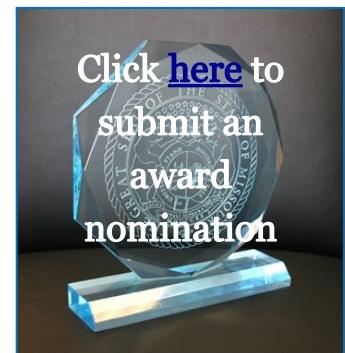
GCD seeks Nominations for Annual Awards

By Claudia Browner

For more than 25 years, the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD)'s [Inclusion Award](#) has showcased individuals or organizations that have demonstrated best practices in inclusion of people with disabilities. A few years ago, GCD added two award categories: the [Youth Leadership Award](#) recognizing emerging leaders in the disability community, and the [Website/IT Award](#) honoring Missouri non-profit organizations that offer accessible and user-friendly websites.

A panel of judges selects the winners for each award category and the winners receive their awards at the Power Up Assistive Technology conference.

If you know of any individuals or organizations who deserve to be recognized for their accomplishments, please submit a nomination for one (or more) of these prestigious awards! The nomination forms can be found and completed online at https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/files/2017Nomination_Information.pdf



October is Disability History and Awareness Month

By Claudia Browner



Nationwide, October is celebrated as [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#). In Missouri, legislation was passed in 2011 designating October as **Disability History and Awareness Month**.

The Governor's Council on Disability celebrates these events by hosting a Disability History and Awareness, and Employment display in the Truman State Office Building during the month of October.

To learn more about disability history and find great resources on how to promote and celebrate Disability History Month, download the

[***Disability History and Awareness: A Resource Guide for Missouri***](#)

or visit <http://disability.mo.gov> and click on Educational Resources.

**Missouri Governor's
Council on Disability
Members**

- Yvonne Wright, Chair,
New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D.,
Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock,
Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D.,
St. Louis
- Ronald Hack,
St. Louis
- Chip Hailey,
Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter,
St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon,
West Plains
- Katie Jones,
St. Peters
- Todd Mayfield,
Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega,
Columbia
- Susan Orton,
Creve Coeur
- James Trout,
St. Louis
- Robert Wallace,
St. Louis

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

By Brooke Dawson

In October, 2015, Missouri was one of 24 states that received a Planning Grant from the federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to prepare for implementing a federal demonstration project designed to pilot implementation of a Medicaid prospective payment system for community behavioral health services provided by organizations meeting new national standards for community behavioral healthcare.

In October 2016, Missouri was one of only eight (8) states selected by SAMHSA and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to actually pilot the prospective payment system.

During the planning process, the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) determined that 19 community behavioral healthcare organizations serving 25 of the state's 28 behavioral health service areas were in substantial compliance with the new federal standards for "Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics" (CCBHCs), and that they were eligible to participate in the Demonstration Project. CCBHCs are required to provide:

- Crisis Mental Health Services
- Screening, Assessment and Diagnosis
- Patient-centered Treatment Planning
- Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services
- Screening and Monitoring of Health Risks and Status
- Targeted Case Management
- Psychiatric Rehabilitation
- Peer and Family Support Services

The populations of focus for the Demonstration Project in Missouri include:

- Adults with serious mental illness
- Children and adolescents with serious emotional disorders
- Children, adolescents and adults with moderate to severe substance use disorders
- Children and adolescents in state custody who have behavioral health issues
- Young adults with mental illness or substance use disorders identified as in need of treatment by the courts, law enforcement, or hospital emergency rooms.

CCBHCs are required to provide services to members of the armed forces and veterans consistent with guidelines set forth by the Veterans Administration.

The Demonstration Project (which began on July 1, 2017, and runs through June 30, 2019) is designed to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of converting Medicaid reimbursement for community behavioral health services from a fee-for-service reimbursement system to a prospective payment system while improving the availability, accessibility, and quality of community behavioral healthcare. An independent contractor has been selected by SAMHSA to conduct a national evaluation of the Demonstration Project across the eight (8) participating states.

**Missouri Governor's
Council on Disability
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Legislative Coordinator

For additional information go to:
<http://dmh.mo.gov/CertifiedCommunityBehavioralHealthClinics.htm>

Article provided by Brooke Dawson, Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Mental Health

Upcoming Events

- The Missouri Advocacy Summit scheduled for November 18, 2017 has been canceled and will be rescheduled for a later date.



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 3, Number 6, December 2017

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe

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"It's the most wonderful time of the year" certainly rings true. The month of December is always busy. Following Thanksgiving, it is a time to reflect on all that we have and all we can do. When we all focus on what we can do, and what others can do instead of the disability one happens to have, we can accomplish so much more. We are more than our disability.

Think of all of the types of disabilities that exist in our world today. So many that are visible and many that are invisible. Let's flip it and think of it the other way...how many things can be done? So many things one can accomplish when one's mind is put to it. This brings me to a couple of my favorite quotes. Coach John Wooden once said "Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do." Think about that...have you ever spent (or wasted) time thinking about how unfortunate it is that you cannot do something? All of that time is wasted time...time you could have used doing something you are able to do! Henry Ford said "If you think you can or can't, you are right." Ah, self-fulfilled prophecy.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned over the years is that we never know what others are going through. We all wear masks. We often have a mask for work, a mask for school, a mask for church, a community mask, and on and on. Under that mask, only we know what hurdles we face in life. The same is true for others. If we try to just treat everyone with kindness the world would be a better place.

Here at GCD we are thankful for another year of "Yes we can!" and we are certainly looking forward to another great year of achieving more individually and collectively. As you experience the holiday season and the coming of the New Year, focus on all that you and others can do. Celebrate those abilities. Take off your mask with those who are most dear to you. Spend your time with those closest to you. Plan for a great new year of what you can do.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,



Date set for 2018 MO-YLF

by Wendy Molitor



The [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) planning committee has been working diligently to plan and prepare for the 2018 MO-YLF to be held at the University of Missouri Columbia campus July 10th-14th 2018.

Several modifications are being implemented in order to make the application and review process more accessible and streamlined for applicants. Strategies are also being discussed on how to better engage, empower and educate the parents of the MO-YLF delegates for 2018.

Applications are now open for staff, volunteers and delegates. The delegate application deadline is February 28, 2018.

The MO-YLF planning committee and alumni would love to see GCD council members and state liaisons volunteer this year and experience this life-changing event.

Meet MO-YLF alumna Rachel Baskerville

by Claudia Browner



Rachel Baskerville

This month's [MO-YLF](#) spotlight is on Rachel Baskerville. In July of 2005, just before she started her senior year in high school, Rachel attended the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, a leadership program for students with disabilities. Rachel's personal experiences and the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum helped her decide to pursue a degree in social work. In 2013, Rachel graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri. Rachel is employed as a Community Resource Specialist for Camden County Developmental Disability Resources.

Since attending the MO-YLF in 2005 as a delegate, Rachel has continued to serve as a volunteer staff member with the MO-YLF almost every year. The program had such an impact on her life that she wanted to give back and watch other students be impacted by the program. In her last semester of college, Rachel did her practicum with GCD, and helped start a non-profit organization for the alumni of the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, the MYLIFE Alumni Association. Rachel currently serves as chair of the MYLIFE Alumni Association. She also serves on the planning committee for the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum.

Rachel has also been involved with various Centers for Independent Living in the state of Missouri. She currently serves on the Independent Living Resource Center board and the Arc of the Lake board. Her job allows her to learn about various resources to help advocate for people with disabilities and educate people within the community about people with disabilities.

Rachel is a great advocate for herself and other people with disabilities. She believes that self advocacy is about getting involved and understanding issues that affect the lives of people with disabilities, and how to stand up for yourself and your rights and improving the lives of others.

In January 2018, Rachel will be a panel speaker at the Life Conference in Delaware. She will be talking about her journey and the importance of self-advocacy and finding the potential within you to be a self-advocate.

In 2018 Rachel and her coworker are planning on starting a pilot program in Camden County called Choices. The Choices Program for high school students teaches students that the choices they make while in high school can affect them later in life. In the Choices Program, there will be discussions on topics such as prioritizing, time management, working versus not working, and budgeting. For more information on the Choices Program, please visit www.choices.org.

Money Follows the Person Program

by Elise Davenport

Missouri's MFP, or Money Follows the Person, is a program that has helped over 1,600 people transition from facility settings back into the community since 2007. The program got its name because the Medicaid money, which can pay for care in a facility setting, can instead be used for Home and Community Based Services. Assisting people to navigate the steps necessary to regain their independence and live a life in the community is what MFP does.

The overall goal of MFP is *"to support people who have disabilities and those who are aging to move from a nursing facility or habilitation center to a quality community setting that meets their needs and wants."*

The objectives of MFP are:

- to move people from a facility to the community;
- identify and eliminate barriers that prevent people from being able to move to the community;
- improve the ability of MO HealthNet to provide in-home services;
- and to ensure that there is continuous quality improvement of in-home services provided.

To learn more about MFP and see success story videos about MFP participants, go to on.mo.gov/mfp.

Article written by Elise Davenport, Money Follows the Person Program

Council members unanimously approved a letter of support for continuation of the Money Follows the Person program at the November meeting. The letter was sent to the Governor and General Assembly.

Meet Council Member Katie Jones

by Claudia Browner

The Council's newest member appointed by Governor Greitens on October 27, 2017 is Katie Jones from St. Charles, Missouri.

Katie's passion for working with adults with disabilities began as a college student while working at Willow's Way. In 2001, Katie graduated with a bachelor's degree in Social Work and a minor in Sociology from Lindenwood University. After career positions with the Division of Family Services and Cardinal Ritter Senior Services, Katie came to work for BCI as an Employment Support Specialist in 2004. Today, Katie continues to be an integral part of BCI as the Director of Organizational Employment Services & Political Advocacy.



In a statement about her appointment to the Council, Katie said, "Much of my background has focused on employment. This economy presents a perfect scenario to prove what an asset adults with disabilities bring to the workforce. I'm excited to be a part of this reputable council and plan to serve with both passion and pride."

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair, New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D., Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter, St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Katie Jones, St. Charles
- Todd Mayfield, Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega, Columbia
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Amy Bledsoe, Executive Director
- Claudia Browner, Executive
- Wendy Molitor, Disability Program Specialist
- Laura Mueth, Disability Program Specialist

GCD Program Updates

GCD Position Papers

The Governor's Council on Disability has developed [position papers](#) on topics that are important to people with disabilities, such as Education, Employment, Housing, and Transportation.

Most recently, the Council's Advocacy Committee developed a position paper on Healthcare, which was approved by the full Council in November.

The position papers are available to the public on GCD's website at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/positionpapers.htm>

The Governor's Council on Disability invites you to read the position papers and share the information with others who might be interested.

GCD Awards Programs

GCD is accepting nominations for its annual awards programs through January 31, 2018. Please send in your nominations for individuals or organizations who deserve to be recognized for their accomplishments in inclusion, youth leadership, or Website accessibility!

The [Inclusion Award](#) showcases individuals or organizations that have demonstrated best practices in inclusion of people with disabilities. The [Youth Leadership Award](#) recognizes emerging leaders in the disability community, and the [Website/IT Award](#) honors Missouri non-profit organizations that offer accessible and user-friendly websites.

Please submit a nomination for one (or more) of these prestigious awards!

The nomination forms can be found and completed online at https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/files/2017Nomination_Information.pdf

Legislative Updates

For those who aren't aware: GCD produces a legislative update which tracks Missouri House and Senate bills impacting individuals with disabilities. It is distributed every Friday of the legislative session.

If you would like to subscribe to the weekly update, please contact Laura with your name and email address. She can be reached at Laura.Mueth@oa.mo.gov (preferred method), 573-751-2600, or 800-877-8249. The email includes a Microsoft Word version, a PDF version, and a plain text version to accommodate a variety of needs and preferences.

Upcoming Events

- January 31, 2018 Nomination deadline for [GCD Annual Awards](#)
- February 28, 2018 Application deadline for [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#)
- March 2, 2018 Lake Area Transition Fair, State Fair Community College, Osage Beach
- March 14, 2018 Cole County Youth Transition Fair, Lincoln University, Jefferson City
- July 10-14, 2018 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, MU Campus, Columbia

For more information or questions about the events, please contact our office at 573-751-2600.